

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA:ARDAY:TH

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.

P:JJSISCO

S/S - O: M. TANNER

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TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE, US

SUBJECT: LEBANON

1. RECENT REFLECTIONS OF SYRIAN SUSPICIONS ABOUT U.S. ACTIVITIES IN LEBANON, SUCH AS ASAD'S CONVERSATION WITH SENATOR MATHIAS, HAVE BEEN DISAPPOINTING BUT PERHAPS NOT SURPRISING GIVEN THEIR POST-SINAI II PERCEPTIONS, THE COMPLEXITY OF THE PROBLEM THE SYRIANS FACE IN LEBANON AND THE DIFFICULTIES THEY HAVE BEEN HAVING IN COPING WITH IT. I SEE NO POINT IN A DETAILED EFFORT TO PUT OUR LEBANON ACTIVITIES IN BETTER LIGHT WITH ASAD AT THIS STAGE, SINCE THERE IS LITTLE BASICALLY NEW THAT WE CAN ADD TO WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY SAID. THE FOLLOWING BRIEF MESSAGE, RELATING TO YESTERDAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF AMBASSADOR MELOY'S FORTH-
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COMING APPOINTMENT TO LEBANON, JUST PUTS ON THE RECORD

THE PURPOSES AND MAJOR DIRECTIONS OF AMBASSADOR BROWN'S MISSION. WE EXPECT TO FOLLOW UP NEXT WEEK, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH HUSSEIN, WITH A FURTHER ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION AND STATEMENT OF OUR VIEWS. WE CAN INCLUDE INFORMATION ON BROWN'S TALKS WITH JUMBLATT. PLEASE CONVEY THE FOLLOWING TO ASAD.

2. AS PRESIDENT ASAD IS AWARE, PRESIDENT FORD HAS ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION TO NOMINATE AMBASSADOR FRANCIS

MELOY, JR. TO BE THE U.S. AMBASSADOR IN LEBANON. AMBASSADOR MELOY WILL BE TAKING THE PLACE OF AMBASSADOR GODLEY AS THE REGULAR AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON. HE IS A SEASONED PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMAT AND HE HAS THE SECRETARY'S FULL CONFIDENCE. WITH HIS ARRIVAL IN LEBANON IN THE EARLY PART OF MAY, AMBASSADOR BROWN WILL COMPLETE HIS SPECIAL MISSION AND RETURN PERMANENTLY TO WASHINGTON. BROWN, MEANWHILE, IS CONSULTING BRIEFLY IN WASHINGTON THE WEEKEND OF APRIL 25 -- HE WILL STOP TO SEE ME IN LONDON ON SATURDAY AT THE START OF MY TRIP TO AFRICA -- AND THEN HE WILL GO BACK TO BEIRUT FOR A WEEK OR SO.

3. DURING HIS BRIEF STAY IN BEIRUT, AMBASSADOR BROWN HAS CONCENTRATED HIS EFFORTS ON PERSUADING THE CONTENDING LEBANESE FACTIONS TO COOPERATE IN CARRYING THROUGH THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND OTHER POLITICAL CHANGES REQUIRED TO REESTABLISH PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE COUNTRY. HE BROUGHT WITH HIM NO U.S. PLAN FOR THESE CHANGES, BUT RATHER SUPPORTED THE PLAN THAT HAD ALREADY BEEN WORKED OUT UNDER SYRIAN AUSPICES.

4. THE SECRETARY BELIEVES THAT BROWN'S MISSION TO DATE HAS BEEN USEFUL IN COMPLEMENTING THE SYRIAN POLITICAL EFFORTS. DURING THE PERIOD OF HIS MISSION, THE CEASEFIRE HAS BEEN AGREED TO AND THE FIGHTING HAS BEEN REDUCED TO FAR LESS SERIOUS PROPORTIONS; THE COALITION UNDER JUMBLATT HAS ABANDONED ITS STRONG OPPOSITION TO THE SYRIAN PROPOSALS; AND THE MARONITE CHRISTIANS, DESPITE CONTINUING FEARS FOR THEIR SECURITY, HAVE COOPERATED

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WITH THE PROCESS OF CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE. PRESIDENT ASAD'S OWN EFFORTS, OF COURSE, HAVE PLAYED A FAR GREATER ROLE IN THESE DEVELOPMENTS THAN HAVE THOSE OF THE U.S., BUT WE BELIEVE THAT OUR PARALLEL ENDEAVORS HAVE MADE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION. IN THIS RESPECT, AMBASSADOR BROWN HAS JUST BEEN INSTRUCTED TO APPROACH THE MARONITE LEADERSHIP TO URGE THEM TO MOVE RAPIDLY AHEAD WITH APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AND TO ABIDE BY

FRANGIE'S EARLIER ASSURANCES TO US THAT HE WOULD SIGN THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND RESIGN FOLLOWING THE ELECTION OF ANOTHER PRESIDENT. HE WILL ALSO SEE JUMBLATT TO IMPRESS UPON HIM AGAIN THE NEED TO BE RESTRAINED AND REASSURING IF ALL FACTIONS ARE TO BE BROUGHT ALONG THE PATH, MARKED OUT BY SYRIA, TOWARD POLITICAL REFORM AND LONG-TERM STABILITY. WE SHALL SEE THAT THE SYRIANS ARE INFORMED IN MORE DETAIL ABOUT OUR TALKS WITH THE CHRISTIANS AND WITH JUMBLATT.

5. DURING THE PERIOD OF THE BROWN MISSION, MOREOVER, THE UNITED STATES HAS CONTINUED TO PRESS THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TO REFRAIN FROM INTERVENTION, AND ISRAEL HAS NOT INTERVENED. WE BELIEVE THAT OUR EFFORTS MADE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION HERE AS WELL.

6. SINCE WE HAVE THUS PURSUED A POLICY CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTIVE OF SYRIA, IN CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THIS WAS DIFFICULT FOR US TO DO, THE SECRETARY IS SURPRISED AND PUZZLED BY THE SUSPICION AND CRITICISM WE CONTINUE TO EXPERIENCE FROM THE SYRIANS.

7. THE SECRETARY WANTS PRESIDENT ASAD TO KNOW THAT A GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE LEBANESE CRISIS HAS BEEN THAT STABILITY SHOULD BE RESTORED IN LEBANON AND THE ENERGIES OF OUR GOVERNMENTS AND THE OTHER GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED SHOULD BE TURNED TO THE ACTIVE PURSUIT OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. KISSINGER

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